United Nations A/68/165

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 July 2013
English
Original: Spanish

Sixty-eighth session
Item 115 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of 14 members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 18 July 2013 from the Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the President of the General Assembly and has the honour to refer to the candidature of Uruguay for membership in the Human Rights Council for the period from 2014 to 2016 at the election to be held in New York, in October and November 2013, during the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

In that regard, and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251, the Permanent Mission of Uruguay attaches herewith the document entitled "Candidature of Uruguay for membership in the Human Rights Council, 2014-2016" (see annex) and would be grateful if the present note and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

In the document, the Permanent Mission of Uruguay indicates the voluntary pledges and commitments that the Government of Uruguay undertakes to make should it be elected. The document also contains information on Uruguay's contributions to the Human Rights Council and on the actions that it has taken in order to meet the commitments that it has made with a view to membership for the period from 2009 to 2012.

* A/68/150.

13-40094 (E) 290713 020813

Please recycle

Annex to the note verbale dated 18 July 2013 from the Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Uruguay for membership in the Human Rights Council, 2014-2016

Voluntary pledges and commitments made pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251

Uruguay has submitted its candidature for membership in the Human Rights Council for the period from 2014 to 2016 in light of the following:

Commitments fulfilled

1. As a member of the Human Rights Council since its inception, Uruguay has played an active and constructive role in the institutional establishment of the Council and in the strengthening of its mandates and procedures. The State's commitment to and role in this new body, which has given the promotion and protection of human rights greater importance at the international level, resulted in its re-election in 2009; thus, it has been a member for a total of six years.

2. Uruguay is a State party to the principal international and inter-American human rights treaties and has recognized the competence of all the treaty monitoring bodies at the international and inter-American levels.

3. Uruguay extended a standing invitation to all the special procedures of the Human Rights Council in 2005 and to those of the inter-American system in 2007. It has extended many invitations to thematic procedures and has received six visits since 2009.[1]

4. Another of the most concrete examples of States' cooperation with the system is the submission of national reports to the different treaty bodies. Uruguay set itself the goal of submitting all of its overdue reports in 2012 and ultimately submitted eight such reports.[2] The relevant governmental stakeholders, a civil society

[1] The Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (visit in 2009; follow-up visit in 2012); the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children (2010); the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation (2012); and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right of freedom of opinion and expression (academic visit in 2012). In September-October 2013, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence will visit Uruguay (visit confirmed). In addition, Uruguay hosted a visit by the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights in October 2011 and has hosted various visits from the Regional Representative for South America of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

[2] Reports to the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (three reports), the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The State's most recent reports to the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were submitted in early 2013.

consultation body and, since its establishment in May 2012, the National Human Rights Institution participated in the drafting process.

5. Uruguay was the first country in the world to submit an initial report to the Committee on Enforced Disappearances and thus, in April 2013, became the first country to be considered.

6. Uruguay held the presidency of the Human Rights Council from 20 June 2011 to 31 December 2012. Ambassador Laura Dupuy was the first female President of this body since its inception in 2006. While discharging this responsibility, Uruguay sponsored a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening the universal human rights protection system by promoting cooperation and focusing on a more rational, objective and non-selective use of the Council's special procedures in order to promote cooperation and the strengthening of national capacities.

7. During its presidency of the Council, Uruguay worked to progressively strengthen relations between the Council's mechanisms and States in order to facilitate dialogue and cooperation with the countries concerned, taking into account the need to listen to victims, prevent human rights violations and abuses and, where necessary, condemn them. The Uruguayan presidency supported greater integration of a human rights perspective and coordination between the universal system and other bodies, including regional and subregional organizations. It also attached greater importance to gender mainstreaming with a view to women's full enjoyment of their human rights and to their empowerment.

8. In addition, Uruguay sought to ensure the full participation of civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Council's agenda, including through the use of technology that allowed them to participate in the Council's various bodies without having to attend meetings in Geneva, thus ensuring the participation of small, underresourced and geographically remote NGOs and national human rights institutions.

9. Both as a member of the Human Rights Council and during its presidency, Uruguay has promoted the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. In particular, it has stressed the need to provide the Office with more resources, both from the regular budget and from non-earmarked voluntary contributions, so that it can fulfil more effectively the growing number of mandates that it is assigned each year and provide more technical cooperation. Uruguay has tripled its voluntary contributions to the Office over the past year.[3] The High Commissioner plays a key role in the international human rights protection system; that role has gained importance over the years and experience has demonstrated the need to strengthen it further.

10. Uruguay believes that the universal periodic review has been a milestone in the process of strengthening the international system for the promotion and protection of human rights. In 2009, the country accepted all the recommendations that it received (a total of 88).

11. Uruguay also considers it important to follow up on the commitments that each State makes during the universal periodic review and on the recommendations that it receives. Without a compliance-monitoring system, countries' commitments may become mere promises and the recommendations, unfulfilled expectations. Thus, in September 2012, Uruguay submitted its midterm report on implementation of the

[3] In early 2013, $30,000 was provided.